

NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION



Information Letter



FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

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Proposed Standards for Strained Tomato Products

The Food Standards Committee has proposed definitions and standards for strained tomato products, according to Dr. W. W. Skinner, Chairman of the Committee. Criticisms and suggestions regarding the proposed definitions and standards are invited from food officials, consumers, the trade, and all interested parties. Communications should be addressed to A. S. Mitchell, Secretary of the Food Standards Committee, Bureau of Chemistry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., and should reach him not later than July 1, 1927.

The proposed definitions and standards for strained tomato products are as follows:

1. *Strained tomato* is the product obtained by the removal of the skins, seeds and cores from sound, ripe tomatoes, either raw or cooked, by means of a suitable screen or strainer.
2. *Tomato pulp* is the product obtained by concentrating strained tomato so that it contains from 8.37 per cent to 12.0 per cent of tomato solids.
3. *Tomato puree* is the product obtained by concentrating strained tomato so that it contains from 12.0 per cent to 16.0 per cent of tomato solids.
4. *Tomato sauce*, "Salsa," is the product obtained by concentrating strained tomato, with or without the addition of basil (*Ocimum basilicum* L.) and/or common salt, so that it contains from 16.0 per cent to 22.0 per cent of tomato solids.
5. *Tomato paste*, "Pasta," is the product obtained by concentrating strained tomato, with or without the addition of basil (*Ocimum basilicum* L.) and/or common salt, so that it contains from 22.0 per cent to 35.0 per cent of tomato solids.
6. *Heavy tomato paste*, *concentrated tomato paste*, "Concentrato," is tomato paste concentrated so that it contains not less than 35.0 per cent of tomato solids.

Import Trade in Fresh Vegetables

In an analysis of the import trade in fresh vegetables appearing in Commerce Reports for May 16, the Department of Commerce furnishes statistics for the principal items for the last four years. Separate statistics are given for tomatoes but peas are included in "other fresh vegetables." Regarding the trend of the trade, the article states:

"Of the green vegetables imported there has been a decided increase in imports of green peas, cabbage, and tomatoes. Imports of tomatoes have constantly grown, this trade having increased from 54,147,095 pounds in 1923 to 80,851,601 pounds in 1926. Over 80 per cent of the imports into the United States come from Mexico; Cuba supplies the next largest quantity, and the other West Indies, particularly the Bahamas, ship in between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 pounds. Imports are made throughout the year, but the bulk arrives from December to June, the largest quantity coming in March.

"Imports of green peas rose from 3,820,181 pounds in 1925 to 9,276,925 pounds in 1926. Mexico supplied 3,606,808 pounds in 1925 and 8,941,984 pounds in 1926, and the rest came mainly from Canada.

Imports of cabbage rose from 1,415,438 pounds in 1925 to 14,451,361 pounds in 1926, most of which came from the Netherlands. Cuba, Canada, and Bermuda send small quantities of cabbage to the United States.

"Cuba is the principal source of the string beans imported in the United States (70 per cent of the imports coming from that country in 1926 compared with 89 per cent in 1925), and Mexico and Bermuda supply most of the balance."

Changes in Veterans Bureau Proposals for Canned Fruits

In a notice to bidders with respect to the proposals for canned fruits, noted in Information Letter No. 206, the Veterans Bureau announces that the proposals have been amended to permit the submission of samples smaller than No. 10 size on items 22, 23, 24, and 25, providing that where these smaller samples are submitted the bidder writes into the proposal in connection with each item the guaranteed net drainage weight of each of such items he guarantees to deliver under this proposal. The announcement also notes that the specification for item 25, loganberries in No. 2 and No. 10 cans, is changed to require not less than 70 degrees sugar syrup.

Mexican Duty on Empty Tin Containers

Empty tin containers for preserved food up to five liters in capacity, without inscription or printed matter, will pay a duty of 6 centavos per legal kilo under the newly created item 229B of the Mexican tariff, after May 30 next, according to a cable received by the Department of Commerce. It is understood that such containers are now dutiable under item 207 of the Mexican tariff, which refers to unspecified articles of tin and carries a rate of 60 centavos per legal kilo. The usual surtax of 12 per cent of the amount of the duty applies.

Value of Trap Crop in Combating Corn Borer

Recent items in the canning trade papers have directed attention to the possibility of avoiding injury from corn-borer through the use of trap crops. The method usually suggested is very early planting of sweet corn in advance of the main planting. Observations have shown that in such cases the infestation may be concentrated upon the early planted crop, with corresponding lighter infestation of the canning crop.

This matter was gone into detail with Mr. Caffrey, who for a number of years has been in immediate charge of the corn-borer research work of the Bureau of Entomology. Unpublished data kindly furnished by Mr. Caffrey indicated that the trap-crop method cannot be depended upon with certainty to accomplish the desired results. In 1924 a study of infestation of sweet corn on Ohio farms showed an average of 40.5 larvae per hundred stalks in corn planted April 19 to 26. This was a higher infestation than occurred in any subsequent plantings, and if taken alone would lend some support to the trap crop idea. In corn planted May 1 to 10 the infestation amounted to 17.65 larvae per hundred plants, diminishing with the later plantings to no infestation in corn planted July 4 to 15.

In 1925 the earliest planted corn had practically the same infestation as in 1924, that is, a larval population of 40.17 per hundred stalks of corn planted April 9 to 15. May 1 to 10 plantings, however, had a greater infestation, the average being 59.55 larvae per hundred plants. Still later plantings had light infestation.

In 1926 the earliest planted corn, April 21 to 27, had an infestation of 112.2 per hundred plants; May 1 to 10, 97.7; May 11 to 20, 115.4.

Other data support the foregoing and indicate that while early planting in some seasons may serve to concentrate the at-

tack on the earliest corn, this result is not consistent and in some cases the corn planted three or four weeks later shows severer infestation at the end of the season.

In most canning operations, it is necessary to utilize practically all of the available planting season in order to provide the required spread in time of maturity. While the research entomologists have made no statement covering the possible application of their data to the use of the trap-crop idea by canners, our interpretation of the results up to date would be that this method does not seem to offer to the canning industry a feasible means for combating the corn borer attack. Further studies may indicate greater possibility of usefulness in this method than the inconsistent results from early planting thus far suggested.

Bulletins of Interest to Fruit Growers

Brown rot, scab and curculio on peaches can be controlled by spraying or dusting, according to Farmers Bulletin No. 1527, issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Directions for the application of sprays and dusts, together with formulas for making up the various spray fluids and dusts are given in this bulletin.

In Farmers Bulletin No. 998, issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, directions are given for planting, trimming and pruning the Logan blackberry and related varieties, and for harvesting and utilizing the fruit. Attention is also called to the Young dewberry, the result of a cross between the Phenomenal and the Austin-Mayes dewberry, which is much sweeter than the Logan and succeeds in the Southeastern states. A statement is made in the bulletin that the Young dewberry may replace the Logan in many places on the Pacific Coast.

Another Case of Monoxide Poisoning

Recent investigation of an alleged food-poisoning case in an Eastern city reported by the newspaper under the heading "Food Poisons Two at Party; One Dead," reveals another instance of the difference between off-hand opinion and thorough investigation. According to the newspaper report, an ambulance surgeon ascribed the death to food poisoning; examination by the toxicologist of the city medical department revealed the presence of a large amount of carbon monoxide (coal-gas) in the blood of the dead man.

Carbon monoxide claimed the victim; food got the blame. It has happened before and will probably happen again, but the

investigation system of the National Canners Association, by endeavoring to establish definitely where responsibility rests in alleged food-poisoning cases, is gradually impressing both the medical profession and newspapers with the importance of getting the real facts before giving publicity to reports that are damaging to the food industries.

Unwarranted Claims For Can Opener

The canning industry has recently been circularized in the interest of a new can opener, which has an attachment intended to indicate whether the can has a vacuum. The advertising matter accompanying the circular gives the impression that food contained in cans which this device shows to have a high vacuum is in good condition and of high quality, whereas, the contents of cans which this device indicates are without vacuum are spoiled or of low quality. Obviously, the distribution of such a device accompanied by statements of that kind would lead to much misinformation.

In response to one of the circular letters the Association has written the distributor of the device as follows:

"Our attention has been called to a letter which you have written to some canners accompanied by a circular of a can opener which purports to determine the quality and wholesomeness of the product by testing the presence of vacuum in the can.

"This circular was doubtless written under misapprehension with respect to the significance of the vacuum. The chief purpose of a vacuum in canned food is to prevent the bulging of the ends which might otherwise occur in warm weather or at high altitudes, even with foods that are entirely sound and wholesome and of the highest quality.

"The sterilization of canned foods prevents the foods from spoiling, owing to the fact that they are hermetically sealed, and bacteria from without are prevented from entering the can. In order to accomplish this, the presence of a vacuum does not in any way contribute to the prevention of spoilage, nor does it have any relation to the quality of the product. Moreover, some forms of spoilage produced by insufficient sterilization occur while the vacuum of the can remains substantially intact.

"We take the liberty of bringing this matter to your attention, since we have no doubt the circular to which you refer was written under misapprehension."

Imports of Jams, Jellies, Marmalade and Fruit Butter

The Statistical Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce gives the following figures on imports of jel-

lies, jams, marmalade, and fruit butter into the United States by countries, during the calendar year 1926:

From—	Pounds	Value
France	135,378	\$35,542
United Kingdom	2,574,037	414,656
Canada	148,554	14,656
Cuba	416,900	41,025
Other countries	258,148	32,615
Total	3,533,017	538,494

Freight Rate Orders and Complaints

By an order entered on May 14, Investigation and Suspension Docket No. 2909, the Interstate Commerce Commission has suspended from May 16 until December 16, 1927, the operation of certain schedules as published in tariffs I. C. C. No. 1171, Supplements Nos. 26 and 29; and I. C. C. No. 1182, Supplements Nos. 5 and 6; issued by H. G. Toll, Agent, and in certain tariffs issued by various other agents and individual lines.

The schedules propose to reduce the rates on canned foods from Pacific Coast points to points in the middle section of the United States, generally from 105 cents to 90 cents per 100 pounds, subject to carload minimum of 60,000 pounds.

In a complaint filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission (No. 19561, Sub 1, Luckenbach Steamship Company et al. v. Lehigh Valley Railroad et al), the Commission is asked to require defendants to establish and maintain from North Atlantic ports westward into the consuming market rates on canned fruits and vegetables made on the same basis as the defendants' rates from the Pacific Coast.

The Commission has issued a supplemental order so as to provide that the same manner of relief as granted with respect to commodity rates on articles under the heading of canned goods, described in the Memphis Southwestern Investigation (77 I. C. C. 473) shall also apply to tomato puree in metal cans.

By an order entered February 9, and noted in the Information Letter for February 12, the Commission suspended until June 10 the operation of certain schedules which proposed to cancel the carload and less-than-carload commodity rates on canned foods from South Atlantic ports to certain Western destinations. As the carriers concerned have filed a tariff effective June 1 cancelling the proposed schedules, the Commission has now set aside its previous order and discontinued the proceedings, so that the rates will remain as before.

Hearing on Transit Loading Privilege Postponed

The public hearing on the proposal of carriers in Central Freight Association, Illinois Freight Association and Western Trunk Line Committee territories to cancel the tariff provisions under which shipments may be stopped in transit to complete loading or to partially unload, has been postponed from May 19 to July 1. The hearing will take place in Chicago.

British Canned Foods Imports Increase

The outstanding feature of the British canned foods imports trade, as shown by statistics of arrivals from the first of the year through the week ending April 28, is a heavy increase in the imports of canned fruits, largely of American origin, according to a report from the American Trade Commissioner at London. During the four weeks of April, arrivals of canned fruits were about 229,000 cases, as compared with 115,000 for the corresponding period of 1926, and 140,000 cases for the same period of 1925.

Fruit salad, apparently, is not maintaining the tendency to increase which it showed during 1926, when imports were nearly double those of 1925. On the other hand, loganberries are more than maintaining the 1926 rate of increase, when imports were about 213,000 cases as compared with 146,000 cases in 1925. Canned grapefruit also continues its rapid progress, imports for the three month period in 1927 being already greater than the total imports for 1926.

Freight Movement Continues Heavy

For the week ended May 7 revenue freight loadings again exceeded one million cars, the total loadings amounting to 1,024,416 cars, which was an increase of 28,200 cars over the corresponding week last year and of 41,382 cars over the corresponding week two years ago. The total for the week of May 7 was, however, a decrease of 2,024 cars under the preceding week this year.

The volume of freight traffic handled by the Class I railroads in March was the greatest ever offered to them in any March on record, according to the Bureau of Railway Economics. Freight traffic for the month amounted to 41,816,180,000 net ton-miles which exceeded by 2,218,535,000 net ton-miles, or 5.6 per cent, the best previous record for any March, which was established in 1923. It also exceeded by 3,147,280,000 net ton-miles, or 8.1 per cent, that for March, 1926.

British Columbia Canned Food Production

The 1926 pack of canned fruits, vegetables, and jams, jellies and marmalades in British Columbia is unofficially estimated at 1,072,000 cases, according to a report from the American consul at Vancouver, divided as follows: Fruits, 191,000 cases; vegetables, 621,000 cases; jams and jellies, 215,000 cases; marmalade, 45,000 cases. The 1925 pack was 977,893 cases, including fruits, 520,833 cases; vegetables, 232,910 cases, and jams, etc., 224,150 cases.

Tomatoes, of which 400,000 cases were canned in 1926, make up nearly half the entire fruit and vegetable pack, and both peas and beans exceed in quantity any single fruit item. The entire pack of fruit and vegetables in 1926 was just about twice that of 1922. The 1927 pack is now estimated at 1,000,000 cases, considerably less than was expected at the first of the year.

The coming crop of fruits has been so recently injured by a heavy frost that no reliable information can be given as to the quantity available for the fall canners. It is now estimated that cherries will produce only 20 per cent normal yield; loganberries, 50 per cent; and apricots and peaches 40 per cent.

Compulsory Clean-up Under Way

"The final 30-day drive of the spring campaign to control the corn borer has opened," says a statement issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture under date of March 14. "New York and Pennsylvania began compulsory clean-up operations last week and have already served 200 notices to farmers who have failed to pass inspection. Ohio, Michigan and Indiana began the work this week."

In an address to the supervisors, Mr. L. H. Worthley, Field Administrator, gave two rules for unraveling the knotty problems of clean-up and human nature daily confronting the supervisor—that of common sense and 100 per cent clean-up. "The purpose of the campaign," he said, "is to get the borer and not the fellow who is cleaning up. We want every farmer to finish the work himself and qualify for the extra labor fee. When we say clean, we mean clean. There are no percentages in this clean-up work. We have got to do the job and do it completely."

Government machinery and equipment are now in the field. This includes 64 oil-burning outfits generating heat of approximately 1,400 degrees F. for use in the badly infested lake countries. Five hundred plows have been shipped from the Toledo supply station for duty in the compulsory clean-up, accompanied by trucks and tractors. There are now 800 stubble beaters at work in the central area. These beaters kill off 95 to 97 per cent of the borers with the whirling blades which revolve at 1,500 revolutions per minute.